United Nations A/HRC/32/50/Add.1

General Assembly

Distr.: General
4 May 2016

Original: English

Human Rights Council
Thirty-second session
Agenda item 3
Promotion and protection of all human rights, civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights, including the right to development

Report of the Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance on his mission to Greece*

Note by the Secretariat

The Secretariat has the honour to transmit to the Human Rights Council the report of the Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance on his visit to Greece from 4 to 8 May 2015, at the invitation of the Government. During his visit, the Special Rapporteur held meetings in Athens and the Attica region with representatives of the Government of Greece; the legislative and judicial branches; security forces; the Greek Ombudsman; the National Commission for Human Rights; United Nations entities, international organizations and non-governmental organizations; and community members and other groups and individuals working in the field of combating racism.

In the present report, the Special Rapporteur addresses the legal and institutional framework for combating racism, as well as different policies and initiatives undertaken against racism and xenophobia by the Government, the National Commission for Human Rights and civil society.

The Special Rapporteur then analyses the main challenges the country has faced in the fight against racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, including issues related to the situation of migrants, refugees and asylum seekers, as well as acts and expressions of racism and xenophobia from political parties and police forces.

The report concludes with recommendations to all relevant stakeholders.

* The present report was submitted after the deadline in order to reflect the most recent developments.

GE.16-07286(E)
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Report of the Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, on his visit to Greece**

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** Circulated in the language of submission only.

I. Introduction

1. At the invitation of the Government, the Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance visited Greece from 4 to 8 May 2015.

2. The Special Rapporteur travelled to the capital city, Athens, as well as the neighbouring districts of Thrakomakedones and Spata in the Attica region. He met with representatives from the Government, at the national and regional levels; the legislative and judicial branches; and the security forces. He is particularly honoured to have met, despite their busy agendas, the Ministers of Health; Interior and Administrative Reconstruction; and Justice, Transparency and Human Rights, as well as the Alternate Minister for Migration.

3. In addition, the Special Rapporteur met with representatives of the National Commission for Human Rights, the Greek Ombudsperson, United Nations agencies, non-governmental organizations, community members and other groups and individuals working in the field of racism, as well as migrant workers and asylum seekers.

4. The Special Rapporteur wishes to express his sincere gratitude to the Government for its cooperation and excellent coordination in the conduct of the visit. He is also grateful to the different state agencies for their cooperation. He is indebted to United Nations entities and his interlocutors from civil society for the excellent cooperation they extended to him throughout the visit. He hopes his conclusions and recommendations will contribute to finding concrete ways and means of addressing the challenges raised in the present report in an effective manner.

II. Background

5. In recent history, Greece was invaded by fascist Italy and Nazi Germany in 1940 and 1941, respectively. After the withdrawal of German forces in 1944, the existence of different resistance factions led to a civil war in 1946, which lasted until 1949, with the victory of the western-allied government forces, which helped define the ideological balance of power for the entire cold war period. In 1974, after seven years of rule by a military junta that suspended many political liberties, democratic elections and a referendum led to the current constitutional system of a parliamentary republic. In 1981, Greece joined the European Community, which later became the European Union, and adopted the euro currency in 2001.

6. Starting from 2009, Greece has been facing its worst economic crisis in recent times. The structurally weak Greek economy and the sudden crisis in confidence among its lenders resulted in a government debt crisis. This has been worsened by the ever growing trade deficit since joining the eurozone. In 2010, the Prime Minister of Greece, Georgios Papandreou, paved the way for the first of several bailout programmes from the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the European Commission and the European Central Bank (the "troika") of roughly €326 billion. This led to a drop in the gross domestic product (GDP) growth rate, even though per capita GDP was already about half that of leading eurozone economies. Under pressure from its creditors, Greece has seen the emergence of political tensions between the Government, opposition political parties and trade unions, leading to an extremely volatile political climate in which new extremist parties, including the violent neo-Nazi Golden Dawn, have gained ground. These circumstances ultimately led to the election of the left party Syriza in January 2015, and again in September of that year. Moreover, sharp reductions in public spending and public employment (150,000

positions in the public sector were to be cut by the end of 2015),[1] in combination with increases in value-added-tax rates and cuts in social benefits, have led to a rise in poverty and a permanent state of social unrest."

7. In addition to the financial crisis, Greece has faced major challenges regarding migrants and refugees, whose numbers have sharply increased recently due to its geographic location. More specifically, the country has become an entry point to the European Union and a transit point for hundreds of thousands of migrants and asylum seekers from Africa, Asia and the Middle East, who enter the country mainly by crossing the northern border in Evros and via the eastern Aegean islands.

III. Legal framework for combating racism

A. International and regional human rights instruments

8. Greece is a State party to the major international human rights instruments: the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and its optional protocols; the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment and its optional protocol; the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance; the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights; the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and its optional protocol; the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination; the Convention on the Rights of the Child and two of its optional protocols; the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and its optional protocol; and the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide.

9. Other major relevant instruments to which Greece is a party to include the Protocol against Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea and Air, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime; the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and its 1967 Protocol; and the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949. Greece has not signed the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families.

10. Greece also has ratified 98 treaties of the Council of Europe,[2] including the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms and its Protocol Nos. 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 11, 13 and 14; the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings; the European Convention on the Exercise of Children's Rights; the European Social Charter (revised); the Additional Protocol to the European Social Charter Providing for a System of Collective Complaints; Protocol Nos. 1 and 2 to the European Convention for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment; and the European Interim Agreement on Social Security other than Schemes for Old Age, Invalidity and Survivors.

11. Greece has also signed but not ratified Protocol No. 12 to the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms; the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities; the Additional Protocol to the Convention on

[1] Tyler Durden, "Greek public sector job cuts", *Zero Hedge*, 3 December 2013, available from www.zerohedge.com.

[2] See www.hlhr.gr/index.php?MDL=pages&SiteID=1107.

[3] See official site of the Council of Europe Treaty Office on signatures with ratifications in respect of Greece (www.coe.int/en/web/conventions/search-on-states/-/conventions/treaty/search/states_coe).

Cybercrime, concerning the criminalization of acts of a racist and xenophobic nature committed through computer systems; the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence; the European Agreement on Transfer of Responsibility for Refugees; and the European Convention on the Legal Status of Migrant Workers.

12. Greece is not a State party, however, to Protocol Nos. 4, 15 and 16 to the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms; the Council of Europe Convention on Access to Official Documents; the European Agreement on the Abolition of Visas for Refugees; the Protocol to the European Convention on Consular Functions concerning the Protection of Refugees; and the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages.

13. Greece has signed the Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions. As a State member of the European Union and a part of the Schengen area, Greece must also incorporate all European directives on migration and asylum into national legislation and apply strengthened external border controls.

B. Constitutional provisions

14. The current constitution of Greece, adopted in 1975 and amended in 1986, 2001 and 2008, guarantees respect for and protection of the human being (art. 2); full protection of life, honour and liberty, irrespective of nationality, race or language, religious or political beliefs for all persons living within Greek territory (art. 5, para. 2); and the inviolability of personal liberty (art. 5, para. 3). Furthermore, the Constitution provides for freedom of opinion, expression, speech, press and religion.[4] Moreover, no person shall be arrested or imprisoned without a reasoned judicial warrant, which must be served at the moment of arrest or detention pending trial, except when the person is caught in the act of committing a crime (art. 6, para. 1). Torture, any physical maltreatment, impairment of health or the use of psychological violence, as well as any other offence against human dignity, is prohibited and punished as provided by law (art. 7, para. 2). Every person is entitled to receive legal protection by the courts and may plead before them his or her views concerning his or her rights or interests, as specified by law (art. 20, para. 1). The right of a person to a prior hearing also applies in any administrative action or measure adopted at the expense of his or her rights or interests (art. 20, para. 2).

15. Article 28, paragraph 1, of the Constitution provides that international treaties ratified by Greece have suprastatutory force and take precedence over other Greek law. Fundamental human rights are enforceable through the domestic courts.

C. Legislation prohibiting racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance

16. Until 2005, Greece's anti-racism legislation was limited to Law 927/1979, which was aimed at the punishment of hate speech on racial, ethnic or religious grounds.[5] On 9 September 2014, Parliament approved Law No. 4285/2014, which amends Law 927/1979 by specifically outlawing, inter alia, public incitement to acts or activities that may result in discrimination, hatred or violence against individuals or groups of individuals on all grounds except age, and the malicious denial or trivialization of genocide, and by punishing

[4] See A/HRC/27/48/Add.2, para. 21.

[5] European network of legal experts in the non-discrimination field.

perpetrators of such crimes with imprisonment of three months to three years and a fine of €5,000 to €20,000. Since 2008, hate crimes are punished by criminal legislation. Penalties were further stiffened when new article 81A was introduced in the Criminal Code. In 2005, Law No. 3304/2005, on the implementation of the principle of equal treatment regardless of race or national origin, religion or other belief, disability, age or sexual orientation, was adopted. This law prohibits both direct and indirect discrimination (art. 3, para. 7) and strengthens the Greek Ombudsperson's Office by entrusting new competences to it. According to article 20, paragraph 2, of the new law, the Greek Ombudsperson's Office is no longer excluded from the investigation of complaints related to the service status of civil servants when these concern cases of discriminatory treatment, and the Office may broaden and intensify its mediation and investigation. It may also actively participate in coordination of and awareness-raising among state authorities and civil society.[6]

17. Additionally, Law No. 3304/2005 provides the Committee for Equal Treatment and the Labour Inspectorate Body with responsibility for addressing discrimination by the private sector. It also criminalizes discrimination by private actors as hate-motivated crimes.

18. In addition to Law No. 3304/2005, which is also aimed at combating discrimination in employment, mainly on the grounds of sex and racial or ethnic origin in the private sector, there are several other pieces of legislation that are aimed at protecting employees against discriminatory practices by employers.

19. In April 2014, Law No. 4251/2014, enacting the Code of Immigration and Social Integration, entered into force. The Law, which codified the relevant legislative provisions, limited the categories of residence permit, simplified the conditions for access to the labour market, created favourable investment conditions, promoted long-term resident status and introduced favourable terms and conditions of stay for the "second migrant generation" under specific integration criteria for third-country nationals who have developed strong links with Greece and Greek society. A third-country national who violates the deadline for voluntary departure or otherwise illegally resides in the country for a period of less than 30 days shall pay on departure four times the relevant fees for an annual residence permit (currently €150). If the duration of such illegal residence exceeds 30 days, he or she shall pay eight times the relevant fees for an annual residence permit (art. 23 of Law No. 4251/2014). Law No. 3907/2011 provides for the creation of an independent asylum service and an appeals authority, the establishment of a first reception service and the adaptation of Greek legislation to directive 2008/115/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council on common standards and procedures in Member States for returning illegally staying third-country nationals. Additionally, Law No. 3772/2009 enforces stricter administrative and penal sanctions on smugglers, and treats their activities as a felony.[7] Law No. 3852/2010, in its article 78, proceeded with the establishment of migrant integration councils within the territorial limits of municipalities. Their role consists in identifying integration problems encountered by third-country nationals and subsequently submitting relevant proposals for the smooth integration of local migrant populations. The migration integration councils are composed of municipal counselors, representatives of local immigrant communities and members of other social entities. Migrant integration councils have been established and are operating in the big urban centres of Greece, such as Athens and Thessaloniki, as well as in other municipalities. Their establishment and

[6] *The Greek Ombudsman's First Year as a Specialized Body for the Promotion of the Principle of Equal Treatment* (Greek Ombudsman, 2005), p. 3, available from www.synigoros.gr/resources/docs/200_synig_2005_32sel_engl_intern.pdf.

[7] Ibid.

everyday operations have been supported by actions taken in the context of the European Fund for the Integration of Third-country Nationals.

20. In December 2015, Law No. 4356/2015[5] on civil partnership agreements for same-sex couples was enacted. According to this law, same-sex couples can choose civil partnership in order to cohabit and enjoy the full rights of married couples. However, they have neither the right to marry nor the right to adopt. Additionally, the Law provides for the creation of the National Council Against Racism and Intolerance, the purpose of which is to formulate policies to prevent and combat racism; monitor the implementation of legislation against racism and intolerance, as well as compliance with international and European law; and promote and coordinate the actions of all stakeholders in order to tackle the phenomenon. Moreover, the above-mentioned law provides for modifications to the Criminal Code (arts. 81A and 361B) in order to strengthen the punishment of hate crimes.

IV. Institutional framework for combating racism

21. The Special Rapporteur was pleased to note that there are credible institutions active in the fight against racism and discrimination in Greece. He met with representatives of the National Commission for Human Rights, a statutory national human rights commission having consultative status with the State on issues pertaining to human rights protection, established by Law No. 2887/1998 in accordance with the principles relating to the status of national institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights (the Paris Principles). In the course of its actions, the Commission has issued several reports and recommendations regarding human rights issues in Greece, which have been raised in both international and European forums. The major issues concern non-discrimination on the grounds of race, ethnic origin or sex; protection of minority populations; immigration policies; education and promotion of human rights; protection of the social rights of refugees and asylum seekers; implementation of the International Labour Organization Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention, 1958 (No. 111); social and legal protection of Roma; and the overhaul of relevant policies and legislation on racial discrimination. In 2011, the Commission expressed its concern in particular about rising racist and xenophobic violence by issuing a number of recommendations, including for improved training of police and the judiciary with regard to racist crimes, and issued guidelines on the investigation and registration of these violent acts. In December 2013, the Commission called for a change of Law No. 927/1979 (A 139) to adapt it to European Council framework decision 2008/913/JHA on combating certain forms and expressions of racism and xenophobia by means of criminal law, a recommendation which was followed by the enactment, in September 2014, of Law No. 4285/2014 for that purpose. In January 2015, the National Commission for Human Rights, in the context of delivering its opinion regarding the periodic report of Greece on the implementation of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, coordinated by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, had the opportunity to assess the status of implementation of that Convention. In that respect, the Commission cited a series of comments, expressing concern at the rapid and dramatic deterioration of living standards in Greece, which had led to the impoverishment of a large section of the population, widened social gaps, disrupted the social fabric and caused a resurgence of extremist and intolerant elements, thus undermining democratic institutions. It has also repeatedly urged the authorities to take joint action with the Governments and parliaments of other States members of the European Union and the European Parliament so that every measure of "economic governance" is

[5] See https://nomoi.info/%CE%A6%CE%95%CE%9A-%CE%91-181-2015-%CE%83%CE%B5%CE%BB-1.html.

adopted and applied with the protection of the fundamental human rights. (These recommendations were also made in 2010, 2011 and 2013.)

22. The National Commission for Human Rights has also commented on the inadequate support of the authorities of Greece with regard to combating discrimination against Muslim women, and has highlighted the lack of a comprehensive legal and regulatory framework for the effective implementation of the action plan for the social integration of Greek Roma. The Commission has thus proposed the expansion of the sociomedical community centres, the enhancement of action towards equal treatment in housing, the immediate registration of Roma at the municipal level and the creation of educational programmes on human rights for state officials.

23. The Special Rapporteur was pleased to hear that United Nations experts, as well as several entities of the Council of Europe, had quoted excerpts of the recommendations of the National Commission for Human Rights in their reports on Greece.[9] The Independent Expert on the effects of foreign debt and other related international financial obligations of States on the full enjoyment of all human rights, particularly economic, social and cultural rights, explicitly referred to a more dynamic approach to systematically analysing the impact of austerity on human rights.[10] The Commission has also expressed satisfaction with the legislative initiative of the Ministry of Interior and Administrative Reconstruction regulating the establishment of departments and agencies of response against racist violence, and has highlighted the need for unreserved condemnation of each act of police violence or arbitrariness. The Commission has further highlighted the need for collaboration among state agencies; the Racist Violence Recording Network, which monitors racist incidents nationally; non-governmental organizations (NGOs); and immigrant communities.

24. The Special Rapporteur also met with the representative of the Greek Ombudsman's office, a constitutionally sanctioned independent authority that has existed since October 1998, and which currently operates under Law No. 3094/2003, to safeguard and promote the rights of citizens. The Office offers its services to the public by investigating individual administrative actions taken or omissions by government departments or public services that infringe on the human rights of individuals. Each submitted complaint goes through a three-stage process before a settlement is reached.

25. Additionally, according to the European directive 2008/115/EC (art. 8, para .6) and a joint ministerial decision issued by the Government of Greece in October 2014, the Greek Ombudsman is officially the independent body responsible for the control of all stages in the process of returning migrants to their countries of origin.

26. In 2014, the Office received 16,339 complaints, an increase from 14,738 in 2013 and a 50 per cent increase from the numbers reported in 2011.[11] The Office reports that 80 per cent of these cases are successfully settled; they mostly concern issues related to public insurance and taxation. Nevertheless, the Greek Ombudsman's office offers its services free of charge and produces reports on specific issues. In 2014, the Office published reports on

[9] In particular, the European Committee of Social Rights quoted seven decisions proposed by the National Commission for Human Rights in regard to the urgent need to reverse the trend of debasement of individual and social rights; the Committee of Ministers referred to the Commission's propositions regarding the application of the European Code of Social Security by Greece; and the Commissioner for Human Rights, in its 2013 paper on "Safeguarding human rights in times of economic crisis", made reference to a more rigorous analysis of the implications of austerity measures for human rights, as recommended by the National Commission for Human Rights of Greece.

[10] See A/HRC/31/60/Add.2.

[11] See www.synigoros.gr/resources/docs/150403-dt-ee.pdf.

the fight against discrimination (Law No. 3304/2005), gender equality in employment (Law No. 3896/2010), the return of migrants (Law No. 3907/2011) and prevention of torture (Law No. 4228/2014).

27. Regarding discrimination, particularly on the basis of sex and gender, complaints were registered from both the public and private sectors, with more emphasis placed on initiatives relating to compulsory retirement for women or dismissal during maternity protection periods.

28. The Greek Ombudsman's office also reported on the return of migrants to their countries of origin and on the excessive length of their detention in Greece, which in some cases exceeded the limit of 18 months established by Greek law and the European Union normative framework. The office reported a 24.5 per cent rise in the number of irregular migrants entering the country during the first half of 2014 in comparison with the same period in 2013. The Office proposed the immediate transfer of migrants to premises in conformity with Law No. 3907/2011; the restriction of detention periods; the implementation of alternative measures to detention, in accordance with article 22, paragraph 3, of Law 3907/2011; the adequate operation of migrant reception centres at all entry points to ensure humane and dignified living conditions; and the provision of medical examinations and support to those in need. The assignment of legal aid, the usage of mobile networks in the Amygdaleza detention centre and special treatment for minors were also some of the recommendations made.

29. The Special Rapporteur also met with the Economic and Social Council, an administrative body tasked with the promotion of equal treatment in employment established by Law No. 2232/1994. The mandate of the Council is to formulate policies that are mutually acceptable to the three groups represented: employers/entrepreneurs; private and public sector employees; and others, such as farmers, self-employed people, consumers, people with disabilities, gender equality organizations and the local government. According to Law No. 3304/2005, the Economic and Social Council presents annual reports on developments relating to the implementation of the principle of equal treatment, mainly in employment, makes suggestions to the Government and to social partners with regard to promoting non-discrimination, and encourages dialogue with NGOs and union representatives interested in combating discrimination on the grounds of ethnic or racial origin, religion or belief, sexual orientation and disability.

30. The Special Rapporteur was informed that, after the Greek elections in January 2015, the new justice minister had pledged to amend the 2014 anti-racism law and to strengthen training on racism and xenophobia for the judiciary and prosecutors. The minister also stated that prosecutors should be required to investigate bias as a possible motive in crimes and to present any evidence thereof to the courts, which should be required to consider such evidence and explain the reasons for applying or not applying a penalty enhancement.[12] The law provides that victims are exempted from paying a fee to file their complaint. Law No. 4251/2014 was amended by Law No. 4332/2015 to incorporate measures aimed at protecting undocumented migrants who are victims or witnesses of hate crimes. These measures will also protect migrants from any negative repercussions pending a prima facie assessment by a prosecutor of the merits of their complaint. The Government also indicated that it had abandoned anti-immigrant police operations like Xenios Zeus. In February 2015, the Government pledged to shut down

[12] Human Rights Watch, "Greece: address longstanding rights issues", 19 February 2015, available from www.hrw.org/news/2015/02/19/greece-address-longstanding-rights-issues.

migrant detention centres,[11] after having announced the end of immigration detention beyond the 18 months permitted by European Union law. According to Law No. 4332/2015, which has integrated the provisions of an earlier joint ministerial decision (30651/2014), a residence permit for humanitarian reasons is granted, inter alia, upon a decision of the Minister of Interior and Administrative Reconstruction, to third-country nationals residing in Greece who are victims or witnesses of racist crimes. This entitles them to free medical services and health care, as well as access to the labour market.

V. Public policies and initiatives from government and civil society to combat racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance

31. The Special Rapporteur is pleased to note that the Ministry of Justice, Transparency and Human Rights has included the fight against racism and racist violence in its human rights national action plan for the period 2014-2016, a multidisciplinary and coordinated effort to protect and promote human rights, taking into account recommendations made by international organizations. The content of the action plan sets the guidelines for administrative, governmental, legislative and judicial structures and serves as a reference for organizations, institutions and international bodies on the implementation and realization of policies and actions aimed at protecting human rights. A special working group has been set up by the Ministry of Justice, Transparency and Human Rights to monitor and evaluate the implementation of the action plan, with the assistance of the competent authorities and civil society.

32. The Special Rapporteur was also informed of the creation of a specialized public prosecutor and the introduction of special police units which would investigate incidents of racist violence. The first public prosecutor for racially motivated crimes was appointed in 2012 to conduct preliminary investigations and hearings following the submission of relevant accusations, lawsuits or complaints involving the perpetration, preparation, provocation or incitement to the commission of crimes or offences that cause discrimination, hatred or violence against persons or groups of persons because of race, colour, religion, descent and national or ethnic origin. The prosecutor also supervises preliminary investigations conducted by the Department of Racist Violence Response of the Hellenic Police. This specialized department can open an investigation ex officio, as well as receive anonymous complaints that are later sent to the public prosecutor for action. In 2013, the State Security Directorate of the Police of Attica launched a hotline for the recording of complaints regarding incidents of racist violence.

33. With regard to the Roma community, the Government, together with the Ombudsperson, launched an integrated action plan for the period 2002-2008, in favour of the social inclusion of vulnerable groups. The action plan puts special emphasis on issues related to the rights of Roma children concerning education and medical care. The plan is aimed at promoting social inclusion by offering to Roma identification and birth certificates, along with other administrative procedures, as well as establishing an inter-municipal Roma network for access to information and other services.

34. The Ministry of National Education in 2008 initiated a programme for the education of immigrant and repatriated students, which is aimed at fostering the integration of

[11] According to media outlets, the detention centres were never shut down but they were underperforming. In respect to this, numerous migrants were liberated but they seem to have ended up living on the streets (see www.cnn.gr/news/ellada/story/17128/skepseis-moyzala-gia-epanaleitoyrgia-ton-kentron-kratisis-metanaston).

students and enabling them to develop their skills in their new environment.[14] The Special Rapporteur was pleased to note that at the time of his visit the Greek school curriculum was being revised to reinforce understanding and respect for multiculturalism, and that the training and sensitization of teachers was considered of primary importance, with an emphasis placed on the fight against discrimination, and on intercultural education. In 2013, the Ministry of Interior developed a national strategy for the integration of third-country nationals. Priority areas of the strategy are information services, education, Greek language courses, employment, vocational training, health, housing, political participation, equal opportunities, intercultural dialogue, the promotion of the principle of equal treatment, the combating of discrimination, the sensitization of the receiving society and the combating of racist and xenophobic phenomena. Furthermore, the Ministry of Interior, as responsible authority for the European Fund for the Integration of Third-country Nationals for the period 2007-2013, implemented, in collaboration with public and private stakeholders in the integration process and with civil society organizations, a series of actions promoting the smooth integration of third-country nationals in Greek society.

35. The Special Rapporteur was pleased to meet with the Racist Violence Recording Network, which was created in October 2011 by an initiative of the National Commission for Human Rights, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and other civil society organizations. Today, it counts 38 member organizations, which provide legal, medical, social and other support services to victims of racist violence. The Network records racist incidents and analyses the quantitative and qualitative trends relating to racist violence in Greece. Stakeholders respect the principle of confidentiality, and incidents are reported to the network without any reference to personal data.

36. The essential contribution of the Network—addressing racially motivated acts and xenophobic attitudes—appeared as early as the first months of its pilot phase. During the January-December 2014 period, the Network recorded 81 incidents of racist violence involving more than 100 victims. In 46 incidents, immigrants or refugees were targeted because of their ethnic origin or skin colour, while 32 incidents were committed against lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender persons (in three of those cases, the victims were foreigners). It also recorded three anti-Semitic attacks, in which places of worship and symbols were desecrated. In most cases, the perpetrators were not members of extremist organizations, but rather Greek citizens, mostly men, and public servants.[15]

37. The Network recommended that the authorities update circular No. 7100/4/3 of 24 May 2006, as issued by the police, on the obligation of police officers to investigate racist motivations for crimes, to collect relevant data and to record and/or report each incident committed against someone for reasons of national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, disability, sexual orientation or gender identity.

38. Regarding racist violence and hate crimes, such as verbal abuse on the streets, the Network also recommended the following: condemnation of such acts by the political leadership and the leadership of the police force; training of police officers regarding their obligation to assist victims, intervene for their rescue and ensure that they are brought before the competent services; cooperation of police departments with governmental or non-governmental bodies and immigrant communities in order to provide medical, social and legal assistance and interpretation to facilitate access by victims to the police; abstention from prosecution on the grounds of illegal entry; and prohibition of arrest and administrative detention of witnesses during the period between filing a complaint and the

[14] See A/HRC/WG.6/11/GRC/1, paras. 84 and 86.

[15] Racist Violence Recording Network: 2014 annual report, available from http://mdmgreece.gr/app/uploads/2015/05/Report_2014eng.pdf.

issuance of the special prosecutor's act, ensuring their access to the competent authorities. The Network also recommended inclusion of sexual orientation and gender identity in the specific government departments tasked with combating racist violence, and protection of the rights of human rights defenders, namely those persons and institutions promoting and protecting human rights.

39. The Special Rapporteur also noted that several United Nations agencies in Greece had conducted programmes which targeted the elimination of racism. The Special Rapporteur was pleased to note that a number of civil society organizations provided significant services, including integrated medical clinics open to all, regardless of their migration status or financial situation. Several human rights organizations were also present in Greece and had conducted extensive research into hate speech and racist violence.[16]

VI. Main challenges in the fight against racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance

A. The economic and social crisis

40. Since May 2010, the Government has been enforcing harsh austerity measures that have not only undermined the enjoyment of economic, social and cultural rights, particularly by the most vulnerable groups, but also resulted in a rise of hate and xenophobic crimes against immigrant communities[17] in an attempt to find scapegoats for the crisis. Although Greece already had the highest poverty rate in the eurozone prior to 2009, the austerity measures, particularly job redundancies and cuts to wages and benefits, have pushed more than a third of the population into being at risk of poverty or social exclusion.[18] Private final consumption expenditure is the main component of GDP, accounting for 72 per cent in 2014, followed by government final consumption expenditure (20 per cent) and gross capital formation (12 per cent). Although austerity measures have included elements requiring a greater contribution to fiscal savings by the more affluent, these measures have nevertheless further reduced the income of population groups that were already at the bottom of the income distribution in 2009, thus exacerbating poverty and social exclusion. The poorest households lost nearly 86 per cent of their income, while the richest lost between 17 and 20 per cent. Moreover, the tax burden on the poor increased by 337 per cent, while the burden on upper-income classes increased by only 9 per cent.

41. There is evidence that a considerable number of individuals and families have been facing extreme hardship. For example, social workers have identified migrants, persons with disabilities and their families, single-parent families with small children, and pensioners as those most affected by the crisis.[19] Such concerns were raised recently by the Independent Expert on foreign debt and human rights, particularly economic, social and cultural rights, following his mission to Greece.[20] Children from low-income families, usually but by no means exclusively of immigrant background, are also at risk.

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[16] *Amnesty International Report 2014/15: The State of the World's Human Rights*, p. 163; Human Rights Watch, *World Report 2015: European Union* , section on Greece, available from www.hrw.org/world-report/2014/country-chapters/european-union?page=2#greece; and European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, *Racism, Discrimination, Intolerance and Extremism: Learning from Experiences in Greece and Hungary* (Luxembourg, 2013).

[17] See A/HRC/25/50/Add.1.

[18] Eurostat, "People at risk of poverty or social exclusion", data extracted in January 2015.

[19] Caritas Hellas, in collaboration with Caritas Europe, 2013 report.

[20] See A/HRC/31/60/Add.2.

B. Hate speech

42. While being mindful of the challenges posed by the economic crisis, the Special Rapporteur recalls that hate speech cannot be tolerated on the pretext of economic hardship of a population.

43. The Special Rapporteur was informed that hate speech in day-to-day public life had increased since 2009, in particular in the context of the rise of Golden Dawn. Hate speech is directed mainly against migrants, Muslims and Roma, but also against Jews and lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender persons. Examples include derogatory comments made on public transport, in schools, in shops or in the streets. These developments are closely linked to the rise of political extremism, as well as the current financial, economic and social crisis, which has eroded social cohesion and the ability of the State to counter its consequences.

44. The Special Rapporteur was also informed that hate speech was present in the media, and on the Internet and social media platforms; it usually went largely unchecked and unpunished, as effective self-regulatory mechanisms seemed to be lacking. The rise of Golden Dawn, facilitated by TV stations broadcasting interviews with its leadership, had led to its normalization, rather than providing in-depth information on its racist and violent ideology and activities.

45. Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender groups have reported that homophobic and transphobic hate speech, verbal harassment and inappropriate comments are allegedly routine in the general public discourse, resulting in them feeling constantly discriminated against and excluded in day-to-day life. The Special Rapporteur was informed, however, that the Parliament had passed Law No. 4356/2015, which since 24 December 2015 had recognized same-sex unions by allowing such couples to enter into cohabitation agreements, in compliance with a European Court of Human Rights judgment of January 2013.

46. The Special Rapporteur was also informed that some senior clergy of the Orthodox Church of Greece had publicly expressed homophobic and anti-Semitic views. The Special Rapporteur is particularly concerned by this information, as the Orthodox Church continues to play a prominent role in Greek society with a strong moral authority.

C. Racist and xenophobic violence

47. The Special Rapporteur was informed about an increasing number of incidents involving racist and xenophobic violence, especially since 2011, coinciding with the unfolding of the country's financial and economic crisis.

48. The Special Rapporteur was briefed extensively by the Racist Violence Recording Network, according to which 65 incidents had been recorded in the first nine months of 2014, 166 incidents in 2013, 154 in 2012 and 63 in the final three months of 2011. Around 60 per cent of victims in incidents recorded by the Network were beneficiaries of international protection, asylum seekers or undocumented persons from countries in which many refugees originate. Such incidents of racist and xenophobic violence involved mostly physical attacks in public places against migrants and refugees on the basis of their skin colour or ethnicity. Until mid-2013, the majority of such attacks were performed in a systematic and organized manner by self-proclaimed vigilante groups, dressed in black and at times wearing military trousers, "patrolling" neighbourhoods on motorcycles. These attacks were mostly beatings and stabbings but also included attacks on residences and shops, as well as arson attacks on places of worship. Most victims of racist attacks refrained from reporting the attacks to the police.

49. Similarly, civil society organizations provided information about "citizens' groups" which had allegedly been formed in some Athenian neighbourhoods, such as Aghios Panteleimonas and Attiki, as self-appointed neighbourhood watch groups. These groups claimed to fill the void left by the financially strapped police forces by patrolling the streets at night to protect residents and rid the streets and parks of migrants.

50. The Special Rapporteur was informed of the failure by police to respond adequately to incidents and reports of violence against migrants and asylum seekers. Despite circulars by the Ministry of Citizen Protection, amendments to the Police Code of Ethics, and training courses on human rights, the police appear ill equipped or ill disposed to investigate reports of racist violence. Police behaviour towards undocumented migrants who are the victims of racist attacks seems to nurture a lack of faith and a fear of arrest and deportation, deterring many from considering seeking assistance from law enforcement agencies. The Special Rapporteur was further informed about the underreporting of homophobic and transphobic violence. Allegations of collusion between police officers and the Golden Dawn party also seem to have diminished trust in the police among victims of racist and homophobic violence. Furthermore, the fact that the police have in the past requested a number of victims to pay a fee of €100 to lodge their complaints created an additional obstacle. Article 5 of Law No. 4285/2014 expressly rules out the imposition of such fees.

D. Racism and extremism in the political arena

51. The Special Rapporteur noted with great concern the rise of neo-Nazi ideology and the rapid increase of its visibility and influence, in both Greek society and the political arena. Since the economic crisis, Greece has seen the rise of Golden Dawn, which entered the Athens City Council in 2010 and Parliament in 2012. The leadership and members of Golden Dawn have openly voiced their hatred of immigrants and Jews on many occasions, as well as praised Nazism and Adolf Hitler, and engaged in denial of the Holocaust and in anti-Semitic hate speech.

52. Furthermore, the Special Rapporteur was informed that Golden Dawn had repeatedly used Parliament as a platform for its racist propaganda. There had been no strong reaction by Parliament to that extreme example of hate speech, which had been widely reported in the Greek media. The lack of resolute responses against hate speech in Parliament was pointed out by the Council of Europe's Commissioner for Human Rights, following his visit to Greece in early 2013. Only recently has action been taken against Golden Dawn members of Parliament by those chairing parliamentary sessions.

53. Members of Parliament representing Golden Dawn participated personally in attacks against migrants, for example, by destroying their open market stalls and verbally or physically abusing members of the public who objected to their actions, in 2012 and 2013. Such incidents were shown on major television channels, and issues of impunity were raised, as the police did not intervene during these incidents. Golden Dawn members also staged events such as the distribution of food and medicine, and the provision of free medical examinations or blood donations, only to those who could prove they were Greek citizens through their identification papers.

54. However, the party's leadership seems to have crossed a clear line in September 2013, when a Golden Dawn member allegedly stabbed to death a 34-year-old singer who was known for his anti-fascist opinions. The killing, on the outskirts of Piraeus, triggered a chain of inquiries that led to a number of high-profile Golden Dawn members being charged as belonging to a criminal organization. Several top officials of the party were subsequently arrested. So far, 78 members have been accused of constituting a criminal organization, and 30 are being held in prison awaiting trial; eight of them are Golden Dawn

members of parliament. It is the first time that an entire party and its leadership have faced trial in Greece. The trial, which began in April 2015, was set to last for at least one year, and involve 300 witnesses and 120 lawyers. At the time of writing, the trial was on its forty--fifth session, with a complete reading of the indictment and the questioning of the Greek police officers who had been called on duty the night of the crime.

E. Refugees and asylum seekers

55. The Special Rapporteur was informed by UNHCR-Greece of the arrival of about 10,000 refugees and 32,000 asylum seekers during 2014; a similar number had arrived in the first half of 2015 alone. At the time of writing, the number of refugees and asylum seekers was expected to reach 900,000, of which 56 per cent came from the Syrian Arab Republic, 25 per cent from Afghanistan, 10 per cent from Iraq and the rest from Pakistan and other countries.[21] According to a UNHCR spokesperson, the largest number of arrivals have been on Lesvos, Chios, Samos and the Dodecanese islands, particularly Kos and Leros. Smaller numbers of refugees have also been crossing into Greece through the land border with Turkey at Evros.[22]

56. The pace and scale of immigration flows to Greece continue to cause tremendous pressure on the Government, as the authorities struggle to identify and register the persons involved. The three existing reception facilities in Lesvos, Chios and Samos are severely overcrowded. Refugees awaiting registration, including families with children, have no choice but to sleep in the open. In addition, many refugees landing on remote beaches, including older people and small children, have had to walk for miles carrying their belongings to the nearest reception centre because of a lack of transport. Similarly, there is no regular provision of food or drinking water to refugees, unless they are accommodated in police-run facilities for registration and processing.

57. The economic crisis has also hit civil society organizations, which used to provide services to asylum seekers and refugees. Refugees and asylum seekers are further discriminated against in their search for accommodation, social services and employment.[23] Some refugees and asylum seekers have reported being treated as criminals by the police as well.[24] Many refugee organizations have pointed out that cases of racist violence by the police are not reported, either to the authorities or to public hospitals.

58. The Special Rapporteur has also been informed of the extensive use of administrative detention, which is being applied to migrants and asylum-seekers without individual assessments.[25] Consequently, asylum seekers, including those from vulnerable groups, such as unaccompanied minors not properly registered as adults upon arrest and

[21] UNHCR, "Refugee/migrants emergency response—Mediterranean", available from http://data.unhcr.org/mediterranean/country.php?id=83http://data.unhcr.org/mediterranean/country.php?id=83.

[22] "UNHCR boosts presence in Greek islands to cope with soaring refugee arrivals", 5 June 2015, available from www.unhcr.org/557171779.html.

[23] According to UNHCR, in 2013, the regional authorities issued and renewed 6,952 work permits for asylum seekers and rejected 1,620 requests while, in the same period, there were more than 33,000 active cases of applications for international protection pending with the police and the new Asylum Service (see "Greece as a country of asylum: UNHCR observations on the current situation of asylum in Greece—December 2014").

[24] Deutsche Welle, "Racism increases in Greece", 25 April 2013, available from www.dw.com/en/racism-increases-in-greece/a-16773119.

[25] European Migration Network report on the use of detention and alternatives to detention in the context of immigration policies in Greece (2014). Available from http://ec.europa.eu.

victims of torture, are detained under particularly problematic conditions.[26] Following a visit to Greece in 2013, the Working Group on Arbitrary Detention made reference to large-scale round-up operations in which foreigners were detained on discriminatory grounds and released shortly thereafter.[27]

59. The European Court of Human Rights has repeatedly condemned Greece for the conditions of detention and failure to provide access to the asylum procedure.[28] In particular, during the first half of 2015, there were 11 noteworthy cases involving refugees and asylum seekers, most of them concerning alleged violations of articles 3 and 5 of the European Convention on Human Rights, on the prohibition of inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, and the right to have the lawfulness of one's detention decided speedily by a court, respectively.[29]

F. Migrant workers

60. The percentage of non-nationals in Greece was reported as being 7.7 per cent of the total population in 2014 and has been growing since that time.[30] It has also been reported that the current economic crisis and growing xenophobia among the population have reduced immigrant registration. Therefore, the actual size of the foreign-born population is estimated to be significantly higher, between 1 million and 1.3 million people, comprising as much as 10 per cent of the population. Migrants come from 120 countries, the majority of them — around 90 per cent — from the Balkans, countries of the former Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and South Asia.

61. Migrants offer low-paid unskilled labour, thus enabling small businesses in particular to face growing competition by reducing their costs. The weakening of social protection, the need for flexibility in labour relations and the restructuring of the economy have all contributed to the intensity of this phenomenon. At the same time, there has been a shift in the professional orientation of Greek nationals, who search for higher-quality jobs. Therefore, professions that are seasonal in nature (agriculture, tourism, construction and fishing) are often occupied by migrants who, due to economic hardship, have become a flexible workforce.[31]

62. The priority awarded to Greek and European Union citizens in the labour market also makes it difficult for other foreigners to find employment. This restriction is aggravated in the current context of economic crisis and xenophobia in Greece, with migrants being the most-affected group. Unemployment rates among migrants reached 40.5 per cent in 2013, double the rate among Greek nationals. Social protection programmes have been known to discriminate on the basis of country of origin with regard to coverage of family members.

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[26] Médecins sans frontières, "Invisible suffering: prolonged and systematic detention of migrants and asylum seekers in substandard conditions in Greece" (April 2014), available from http://cdn.doctorswithoutborders.org/sites/usa/files/attachments/invisible_suffering.pdf.

[27] See A/HRC/27/48/Add.2, para. 62.

[28] In its ruling in *M.S.S. v. Belgium and Greece*, the European Court of Human Rights stated that Belgium had violated the rights of irregular migrants, while Greece was condemned for conditions of detention and ill-treatment of migrants.

[29] European Union Court of Human Rights, Press Unit, Press country profile, Greece (updated in October 2015).

[30] Eurostat, migration and migrant population statistics, May 2015.

[31] See http://extras.ha.uth.gr/g-m/ln2/paper_05.asp.

63. In the past 10 years, there has been an increase in the number of persons working in the informal economy, which attracts migrant workers who are willing to work under grueling conditions without insurance and for lower wages. This regime excludes migrant workers from social services and insurance and renders them vulnerable to exploitation. Moreover, the informal economy also displaces local workers from certain sectors, such as construction, thus exacerbating sentiments of intolerance and racism against migrant workers.

G. Roma

64. The Special Rapporteur witnessed first-hand, through his visit to the Spata settlement outside of Athens, continued discrimination against Roma and how they remain economically and socially vulnerable. In the past, several other United Nations special procedure mandate holders and European mechanisms have raised similar concerns regarding the Roma community of Greece. Their housing conditions, and access to health care and other social services, have nevertheless remained unchanged, even after the various recommendations from international and regional mechanisms. The Special Rapporteur is particularly concerned that the children in the settlement are unable to attend school or to complete primary education, and that the settlement still does not have electricity, which has implications for both the education of the children and their health.

65. Roma continue to be victims of day-to-day insults by members of the general public, and are also subject to negative stereotyping in the political discourse. In addition, the continuing segregation and marginalization that Roma communities face in Greece often go unnoticed by the wider public, even though exclusion from services is ongoing. In May 2013, the European Court of Human Rights, in *Lavida and Others v. Greece*, ruled that the segregation of Roma children into a separate primary school in Sofades, a town in Thessaly, in central Greece, constituted discrimination and a breach of the right to education. It was the third European Court ruling on discrimination against Roma pupils in Greece.

66. Other endemic problems were also brought to the attention of the Special Rapporteur, including lack of or limited access to justice, police brutality, discriminatory and racist attitudes and treatment by prosecutors, and excessive delays in dealing with cases brought before the courts by Roma. A number of cases have reached the European Court of Human Rights due to the failure of domestic remedies; in several such cases, the Court has found that ill-treatment and injury were committed by the police against Roma.

VII. Conclusions and recommendations

67. **Greece has undergone dramatic changes in recent decades, including significant positive developments in the area of human rights, reflected in the work of the well-respected National Commission for Human Rights and civil society, which play a fundamental role in safeguarding the progress made. Similarly, the Government has made important progress in addressing the issue of racism and xenophobia in the midst of a continued economic downturn and the arrival of hundreds of thousands of asylum seekers and migrants due to the ongoing conflicts in the Middle East and North Africa. In particular, the creation of the public prosecutor for racist crimes and special police units, along with the adoption of the human rights action plan for the period 2014-2016, are some of the important initiatives that have been undertaken. These developments have provoked an important debate on diversity, racism and xenophobia in the country, despite the many challenges facing vulnerable individuals and groups, as discussed above.**

68. **In this connection, and in a spirit of continued constructive dialogue with the Government and other relevant stakeholders, the Special Rapporteur wishes to formulate the recommendations listed below.**

Legal framework

69. **The Special Rapporteur recommends that the Government:**

(a) **Expedite the ratification of United Nations treaties that still have not been ratified, particularly the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families. Protocol No. 12 to the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms and the Additional Protocol to the Convention on Cybercrime, concerning the criminalization of acts of a racist and xenophobic nature committed through computer systems, should also be ratified;**

(b) **Amend Law No. 4285/2014 to include language and citizenship among the existing list of grounds of discrimination in articles 1 and 81A. The Law should also criminalize the public expression, with a racist aim, of ideologies with a claim of superiority, defamation and the public dissemination or production and storage of racist material;**

(c) **Amend Law No. 3304/2005 to include the grounds of colour, citizenship and language, extend the scope of chapter III of that Law to include social protection, education and access to goods and services, and include a direct obligation on all public authorities to prevent discrimination in the carrying out of their functions.**

Institutional framework

70. **The Special Rapporteur recommends that the Government:**

(a) **Amend the founding Law of the Greek Ombudsperson's Office, Law No. 24/77/1997, to strengthen the role of the Office by granting it the right to initiate and participate in court cases, as well as intervene in favour of plaintiffs whose cases it has investigated;**

(b) **Grant the Equal Treatment Committee and the Labour Inspectorate an independent status similar to that of the Greek Ombudsman.**

Hate speech

71. **The Special Rapporteur recommends that the Government:**

(a) **Set up a national monitoring mechanism for incidents of hate speech that should include, but not be limited to, a centralized database for court cases;**

(b) **Train its public servants to respect and defend human rights.**

72. **Civil society and Greek institutions that fight against racism can play an important role in the reduction of hate speech as well. This could be realized through campaigns in all public areas and on transport, with the collaboration of the Greek authorities at both the national and municipal levels.**

Discrimination, violence and hate-motivated offences

73. **The Special Rapporteur also recommends that:**

(a) **The Government initiate a reliable and effective body of inspection and data collection, independent of the police and prosecution, entrusted with the**

investigation of alleged cases of racial discrimination and racially motivated misconduct by the police;

(b) The school curriculum be revised in order to raise awareness and further promote acceptance of diversity and the contribution of migrants to Greek society from an early age;

(c) All national policies regarding discrimination be developed together with representatives from minority groups and the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender community;

(d) All police officers be instructed that no fee is to be charged for reporting racist, homophobic or transphobic violence, and that victims of such violence should always be informed accordingly about the procedures for reporting crimes;

(e) All police officers should be trained on the respect and promotion of human rights, new competences should be given to the specialized units on racism regarding victims of hate crimes based on sexual orientation and gender identity, and the police hotline should be staffed with interpreters (at least in Arabic, Farsi and English);

(f) Training for judges and prosecutors should be provided on the application of article 81A of the Criminal Code on hate-motivated offences for which cases of violent incidents on racist and/or homophobic or transphobic grounds are an integral part of investigations and judicial proceedings.

Racism and extremism in the political arena

74. The Special Rapporteur would also like to stress the need for substantial verification of pledges of constitutionality and the banning of racist parties. While outlawing a political party will not be sufficient to change the attitudes of its voters, and might even increase their appeal in the eyes of some, the Special Rapporteur recommends that such a step be taken as a clear signal that organizations advocating racial hatred cannot be considered as a legitimate political force. In this respect, the Special Rapporteur recommends that the authorities launch a broad-based public campaign to denounce racist attitudes as contrary to Greek values and interests, promote an inclusive approach towards Greek identity, with respect for diversity, and end impunity for acts of hatred committed by members of extremist violent parties. He also recommends that the police intervene immediately during violent acts committed by supporters or members of extremist violent parties.

Refugees and asylum seekers

75. The Special Rapporteur recommends that the authorities:

(a) Ensure thorough and independent investigations into alleged human rights violations in the context of border patrols. Furthermore, where medical services are provided by civil society organizations, access to such services should not be jeopardized by police checks;

(b) Decriminalize the provision of accommodation to irregular migrants that are homeless, or even to vulnerable applicants such as mentally ill persons and victims of torture;

(c) Provide for guarantees for those migrants who do not own residence permits in order for them to feel free to report crimes.

Migrant workers

76. The Special Rapporteur recommends that the authorities permanently reduce the number of work stamps needed to renew residence permits and that the Labour Inspectorate pay special attention to the working conditions of migrants in order to prevent their exploitation.

Roma

77. The Special Rapporteur calls upon the Government:

(a) To create a monitoring and accountability mechanism for the implementation of the new Roma Integration Strategy for the period 2012-2020 in which Roma communities will be represented;

(b) To develop an effective strategy in order to put an immediate end to de facto segregation affecting Roma children in Greek schools;

(c) To take action to address the isolated Roma communities living outside of urban areas and promote their access to basic commodities.